

THE BILL WILKERSON HEARING AND SPEECH CENTER
NASHVILLE 4, TENNESSEE

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June 3, 1959

Representative John E. Fogarty
House Office Building
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Representative Fogarty:

I trust that you had an excellent trip and obtained the information for which you went, as your reaction to the various programs of health is vital to the nation. I missed seeing you in Washington, but Mr. Kelley and Miss Bernie were truly helpful. During the meeting of the Working Conference on Hearing Conservation, Res. H.J. 316 was openly discussed on the floor. Following this, and at the suggestion of Dr. Elstad, a meeting was held attended by the following:

Dr. Leonard Elstad, President, Gallaudet College, Washington, D. C.
Dr. Richard Silverman, Director, Central Institute for the Deaf, St. Louis, Missouri, President, Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf.
Dr. Clarence O'Connor, Superintendent, Lexington School for the Deaf, New York.
Dr. Lloyd Graunke, Superintendent, Tennessee School for the Deaf, Knoxville, Tennessee.
Dr. Louis DiCarlo, Director, Gordon Hoople Hearing and Speech Center, Syracuse; Professor of Special Education, Syracuse University.
Mr. Howard Quigley, Superintendent, Minnesota School for the Deaf, Fairbault, Minnesota, Chairman, Committee on Certification for Teachers of the Deaf. Conference of American Executives of Schools for the Deaf.
Dr. Daniel Cloud, Superintendent, New York School for the Deaf, White Plains, New York, representing Dr. Edward Abernathy, Superintendent, Ohio State School in Columbus, President of the Conference of Executives of American Schools for the Deaf.
Dr. George Pratt, Principal, Clarke School for the Deaf, Northampton, Massachusetts, and Chairman of Legislative Committee of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf.
Dr. Hallowell Davis, Director of Research, Central Institute for the Deaf, St. Louis.
Dr. Freeman McConnell, Director, The Bill Wilkerson Hearing and Speech Center, Nashville, Tennessee.
Dr. W. W. Wilkerson, Jr., Medical Director and Chairman of the Board, The Bill Wilkerson Hearing and Speech Center, Nashville, Tennessee.
Superintendent, Rhode Island School for the Deaf. Did not obtain name.

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After a two-hour discussion, it was agreed by those representing the teachers of the deaf, including Dr. Elstad, that if three words were deleted from the bill, they would be truly satisfied. The three words, "are deaf or," on page 3, line 16, can be deleted without damaging your bill in any way, in my opinion. With this change, we will have the support of the group listed above. They are planning on having Senator Lister Hill to introduce a bill, specifically for a program for training of teachers of the deaf.

Also, while I was in Washington, Miss Hillyer of O.V.R. asked that I see her. At the conference, I gathered the impression that O.V.R. was opposed to your bill, as she felt that any enlargement or gains made in the teaching area should be specifically placed under O.V.R. The reasons she gave for opposing the bill, however, were that the Advisory Committee was too large, that the word, "conjunction," on page 4, line 23, was indefinite, and that definite standards should not be spelled out in the bill as you have done by stating that an institution must have three persons with Doctoral degrees before being considered to receive grants.

Apparantly, due to the introduction of this bill, O.V.R. has broadened its hearing and speech training program, but it does not meet the objectives as found in your bill. I am quite sure that their report to the Sub-Committee on Special Education will not be favorable unless you use your influence.

I received the impression that the Department of Education is neither for nor against the proposal. I do not know what course of action the Department of Public Health will take,

I had a short conference with Representative Carl Elliott, and he advised that I see Miss Mary Allen to arrange for the public hearings. She suggested that you open the hearings and that I should close them. Further, she suggested that we have an additional six to twelve witnesses, and that one of them should be Governor Clement. Believe this or not, it was her suggestion and not mine. She asked that I write to various people that I though might present excellent testimony. I discussed this with Mr. Kelley, and he, too, said that I should follow her suggestion. So far, I have received no definite promises from those whom I have requested to act as witnesses, but only a few days have elapsed since they received my request.

Miss Allen felt that Drs. Seiger and Lesser would make excellent witnesses, and I wrote Mr. Kelley accordingly, leaving that matter in his hands. So that we might correlate the number of witnesses, will you please let me know whom you would like to have serve as witnesses, and whether or not they accept your invitation.

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Though Miss Allen stated that she would not invite anyone to testify that she felt would oppose the measure, nevertheless, I have the feeling that it would be wise to obtain one or two persons from various sections of the country to speak for O.V.R. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation has done an excellent job, and I have not desire to slight them. However, that decision rests entirely with you, and also the choice of individuals to act as witnesses.

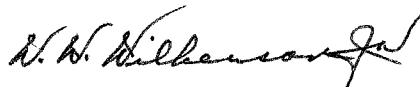
I have not received any information as to whether Senator Lister Hill will or will not introduce this measure and urge its passage in the Senate. I would truly like to have that information as soon as you have an opportunity to discuss the matter with the Senator.

I am enclosing material which I will utilize at the time of the Hearings. Some of this material I have forwarded to Congressman Elliott, Miss Allen, and Mr. Allen Pond of the Office of the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, as they requested. Mr. Allen Pond told me while I was in Washington that he did not know what attitude the administration would take in regard to this measure, but that both he and Dr. McGuinniss were heartily in favor of its passage, and further, that he would use his influence to have the administration support it.

As witnesses are developed, I shall let you know. Please believe that I have only the greatest desire to do that which you want me to do, and I constantly have the feeling that I am encroaching upon your prerogative. Please feel free to give advice, suggestions, and tell me when to start and stop. I anticipate seeing you at least the day before the Hearings are held so that I can learn your strategy and do what you want me to do at the Hearings.

I apologize for the length of this letter, but because of your absence, I had much to report. I am indeed grateful to you and your staff for the fine work you are doing, and the cooperation which you have given me. My kindest personal regards and best wishes are extended to you.

Yours very faithfully,



W. W. Wilkerson, Jr. M. D.

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